



MIDWEST CLOWN ASSOCIATION

Serving the educational needs of Clowns and Alleys in a 7-state region, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin

To Whom it May Concern

I am currently the Chief Joey (President) of the Midwest Clown Association. I am writing on behalf of <<Student/Jr. Joey Name>>'s request to be excused from school for three days to attend an educational conference.

The Midwest Clown Association (MCA) is one of the oldest professional clown associations in the country, holding an annual conference every year, since its creation in 1974. Our organization serves the educational needs of clowns and alleys (established groups of clowns) in a seven-state region: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. Each fall, one of our member alleys serves as host for a five-day convention, called the "Round-Up," where clowns from all over the Midwest (and some from outside the Midwest) gather to learn, educate, compete, share, socialize, energize, and promote the professional entertainment art of clowning. This year's conference is scheduled to be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan on October 7-11, 2020.

Attached you will find a draft schedule of this year's classes, competitions and other activities. You will see a wide variety of class subjects, from clown performance skills to the business side of clowning, including marketing. Our organization has a feature at our conventions called the Junior Joey Program. It is essentially a program for elementary and high school-aged children, and is much more intensive and specialized, with critical one-on-one instruction and training. Included in this packet, you will also find a detailed outline of our Jr. Joey program, including criteria for its leaders, mission statements and goals, and the clown code of ethics, which all professional clowns are expected to follow.

While we understand that a clowning convention may seem all fun and games (and you can see we do have some fun events planned); it is actually a very structured learning environment with over 24 hours of class time scheduled, and we take education very seriously. Each of those class hours have two or three class subject options to choose from. Our instructors often feature trained Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus professional clowns, as well as professional clowns who have made a lifelong career out of clowning are renowned both nationally and internationally, including several who have been employed by McDonald's to represent their chain as their iconic clown character Ronald McDonald. Our curriculum helps our attendees learn skills that can be utilized to earn a living wage; teaches them practical entrepreneurial skills like marketing, planning and scheduling in order to start their own business; instills in them a passion for a fulfilling vocation that brings joy and laughter to the communities where they live; and also teaches them discipline in competitions, realizing that a loss means you try harder next time.

I hope that you will consider the valuable experience three days at our conference would afford <Student/Jr. Joey> in achieving their overall educational goals. Maybe you could even require a special assignment for them to write an essay regarding what they learned while attending our conference, and explain how it has affected their future goals and dreams. Should you need further information about our organization or our conference, feel free to contact me (contact information included below) or visit our website at: www.midwestclownassociation.org or check our Facebook page (Midwest Clown Association).

Again, I hope you will recognize the value of attending our conference as an educational opportunity and excuse <Student/Jr. Joey> from classes on those days. Again, if I can be of any further assistance in helping you to make your decision, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mark Ovanin
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Midwest Clown Association
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